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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

December 3, 2004

Dr. John Faust
Senior Toxicologist
Office of Environmental Health
Hazard Assessment
1515 Clay Street, 16th Floor
Oakland, CA 94610
jfaust@oehha.ca.gov

Subject: WSPA's Preliminary Comments regarding the Definition of "Multi-media Cumulative Impacts" for Cal/EPA EJ Action Plan Implementation.

Dear Dr. Faust:

The Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) is a trade group representing nearly 30 companies that explore, develop, refine, market and transport petroleum and petroleum products in the Western U.S. Our companies market products and have extensive facilities in California including oil production, pipelines, marketing terminals, refineries and retail gasoline outlets. Hence, WSPA is very interested in the programs, plans, and decisions made by the Cal/EPA and its Boards, Departments and Offices. Following are WSPA comments regarding the definition of "Multi-media Cumulative Impacts" under Cal/EPA's Environmental Justice Action Plan (the "EJ Action Plan"). First we would like to state that WSPA supports the comments recently submitted by the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance. In particular, we urge you to consider the following recommendations as you deliberate on this very important definition.

We support Cal/EPA's effort to define "multi-media cumulative impacts" under the EJ Action Plan. We also believe that environmental justice programs should use clearly defined terms, which will allow Cal/EPA and all stakeholder groups to have a common understanding of the state's environmental justice policy.

In response to a suggested definition for "multi-media cumulative impacts" we recommend the following: ***"multi-media cumulative impacts means the adverse health risk posed by exposure to pollutants from multiple pollution sources."***

This definition is appropriate because it captures the multi-media aspect by referring to “pollution sources” as opposed to, for example, just air pollution sources. It also captures the cumulative aspect (i.e., sources evaluated in the aggregate) by referring to “multiple pollution sources”.

This definition is also consistent with OEHHA’s guidance on health risk assessment in that it incorporates both cancer and noncancer risk. It also allows consideration of multiple exposure pathways (e.g., air, water, food, etc.) and the toxicity of the pollutants involved.

We further believe that the definition of “multi-media cumulative impacts” should *not* include social factors (e.g., lack of health insurance, emotional stress, dilapidated housing, crime, poor nutrition, etc.). Environmental justice policies and related regulatory programs cannot be expected, nor should they be required, to resolve broader issues of social injustice. While these are issues that may present serious concerns for a community, they are issues that are beyond Cal/EPA’s jurisdiction and are beyond Cal/EPA’s capacity to resolve.

Cal/EPA’s application of the above-proposed definition would allow objective, as opposed to subjective, evaluation of the cumulative impacts in a given community. This is critical to the development of fair and equitable programs to address cumulative impacts. This definition is also consistent with Cal/EPA’s commitment to develop cumulative impacts policy with a “strong scientific foundation” and will allow Cal/EPA and its BDOs to prioritize their work and focus on the health risks that pose the greatest potential harm.

It is important to note that the proposed definition of “multi-media cumulative impacts” would only cover the **scope** of multi-media cumulative impacts. It would not, for example, address the issue of how the agencies would determine if a cumulative impact problem exists.

We strongly urge you to adopt the proposed definition in lieu of the default definition suggested by members of Cal-EPA’s Advisory Committee on Environmental Justice in September of 2003. The latter definition lacks any consideration of health risk and therefore will not inform rational decisions regarding 1) what constitutes a cumulative impact, 2) whether the magnitude of the impact necessitates further regulation beyond existing program requirements and 3) what measures may be necessary to mitigate the impact.

We recognize the many challenges facing Cal-EPA as it attempts to forge new Environmental Justice policy and we appreciate your consideration of these comments. We look forward to continued discussions with you and other EJ stakeholders.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 916-498-7752.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Catherine Reheis-Boyd". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Catherine" written in a smaller, more compact script than the last name "Reheis-Boyd".

Catherine Reheis-Boyd
Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff

Via Electronic Mail

cc: The Honorable Terry Tamminen
The Honorable James Branham
The Honorable Joan Denton
Ms. Tam Doduc
Mr. Val Siebal